



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Massachusetts Gaming Commission

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**The Massachusetts Gaming Commission Announces Community Engagement
Initiatives Aimed at Enhancing Opportunities for Public Participation**

Strategy Intended to Solicit a Wide Range of Views To Assist the Commission's Decision-Making Process

Today the Massachusetts Gaming Commission (MGC) announces that it is launching a number of community engagement initiatives designed to give the public an opportunity to participate in the process of regulating expanded gaming across the Commonwealth. MGC is presenting several opportunities to encourage community involvement and to assist the Commission with valuable feedback to facilitate an all-inclusive, decision-making process. MGC will continue to announce new programs focused on community engagement as the introduction of expanded gaming progresses. Today the Commission is seeking community input to draft upcoming regulations for the gaming license application process, requesting increased attendance at three upcoming educational forums on critical gaming topics and encouraging the public to connect and share with the Commission on social media.

MGC Chairman Steve Crosby stated, "Providing the citizens of Massachusetts with a fair, open and transparent process is crucial to the success of expanded gaming. The Commission is relying on the feedback of the public as we chart the future and make decisions that affect many. We hope that the public and public officials alike will take advantage of the opportunities provided to contribute and influence outcomes."

MGC is developing regulations that will implement the bifurcated process required under Chapter 23K of Massachusetts General Laws enacted by the Expanded Gaming Act of 2011 to allow for the determination of the background qualifications and suitability of applicants for Category 1 (casino) and Category 2 (slot machine) gaming licenses in advance of the determination of an applicant's entire application. This is a pre-qualification process developed in an effort to expedite licensing.

The Commission believes that the pre-qualification process will achieve the following: expedite the selection of the ultimate licensee(s) by vetting out those applicants at the first stage who do not meet the necessary integrity standards; vetting out unqualified applicants, sparing host communities from extended negotiations with an applicant and voting on a proposed project only to have the proponent of that project later determined to be unqualified for the required license; allow the licensing process to begin sooner with a first stage that will not require a complete project description, preparation of which would entail significantly more time and expense for all parties concerned; and save applicants, host and surrounding communities, relevant government agencies and the interested public the time and expense of reviewing complex developmental plans that may never proceed past the first stage.

The Commission invites all interested parties to provide early input concerning the proposed two-phased approach as the Commission develops its regulations. Comments may address but need not be limited to:

- Whether the proposed two-phased regulatory approach will best serve the interests of the Commonwealth, its cities and towns, the regulated community and the public;
- What considerations the Commission should take into account in developing the proposed regulations;
- Whether the proposed regulations will either save costs or incur more costs; and
- Whether the proposed regulations will either save time or require more time in the context of the overall licensing process.
- Other suggestions for making the application process comprehensive, thorough and efficient.

The Commission welcomes comments from interested parties which should be submitted by July 7, 2012, via e-mail to mgccomments@state.ma.us with “Bifurcation comments” in the subject line or by mail addressed to the undersigned at 84 State Street, Suite 720, Boston, MA 02109. Please include your name, address and affiliation so that we can include you in future mailings and e-mails.

The Commission is hosting an ongoing series of educational forums designed to inform the Commission and the public on various critical matters associated with the introduction of expanded gaming. The forums include an esteemed panel of industry experts, academics and researchers in the relevant subject matters. The public is encouraged to attend these forums and provide the Commission with feedback. The next forum is:

- June 25th, Problem Gambling, North Shore Community College (Lynn)

Participants can register for each forum on the MGC’s website www.mass.gov/gaming. Each forum will also have a live stream for those who are unable to attend in person.

Lastly, MGC has launched its social media efforts aimed at connecting with the community and providing a platform for online engagement. MGC has launched Twitter (@MassGamingComm), Facebook (www.facebook.com/MAGamingComm), and a Youtube page and anticipates upcoming improvements to the website. This network of outreach will provide timely and important gaming information to residents, business owners, and individuals seeking the latest gaming news.

About MGC

The mission of the Massachusetts Gaming Commission is to create a fair, transparent, and participatory process for implementing the expanded gaming law passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor in November, 2011. In creating that process, the Commission will strive to ensure that its decision-making and regulatory systems engender the confidence of the public and participants, and that they provide the greatest possible economic development benefits and revenues to the people of the Commonwealth, reduce to the maximum extent possible the potentially negative or unintended consequences of the new legislation, and allow an appropriate return on investment for gaming providers that assures the operation of casino-resorts of the highest quality. For more information on MGC, please visit www.mass.gov/gaming or connect and share on Twitter (@MassGamingComm) or Facebook (www.facebook.com/MAGamingComm).

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